

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June 1950.

To the Chairman & Members,
Sherborne Urban District Council.

Madam & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1949.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of Article 17(5) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations 1935.

The report shows that the health of the district during the year has remained good and that there has been no undue incidence of serious infectious disease.

I am indebted to Mr. Bean, your Sanitary Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year, and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk, Miss L. Davidge, for her efficient services throughout the year.

I would also like to thank you, Madam and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

John F. Peacock

Medical Officer of Health.

SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR

1949.

A. Area - 1,648 acres.

Rateable value - £57,751

Production of a penny rate - £220.

Vital Statistics.

Population (Register General's Estimate) - 7,280

LIVE BIRTHS.

			Comparative figures for (a) North Dorset (b) England Wales.
Total (94)	Male.	Female.	
Legitimate	33	49	Rate per 1,000 resident pop:
Illegitimate	6	6	= 12.9 14.6 16.7

STILLBIRTHS

Total (Nil)	-	-	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = Nil.	0.2	0.39
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DEATHS

Total (75)	40	35	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 10.3	10.2	11.7
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Deaths in infants under one year (2)	1	1	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 21.2	23.1	32.
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Deaths from Tuberculosis	-	2
Deaths from diarrhoea in infants	-	Nil
Deaths from maternal causes	-	Nil

B. Personal Health Services in the district.

The Personal Health Services, and the Ambulance Service are administered by the Ministry of Health (through the Regional Hospital Board) or by the Dorset County Council. I do not feel that it is necessary to draw your attention to any matters concerned with these services.

Laboratory Services. The County Laboratory has continued to render helpful and efficient services during the year. The services of the Laboratory are available for the examination of water, milk and ice cream samples and for various investigations in connection with the control of infectious disease. A copy of all reports sent by the Laboratory to hospitals or private medical practitioners in the district, which may be of public health interest, are sent to your Medical Officer of Health and are of particular value to him.

C. Environmental Health Services.

Sanitary circumstances of the district -

1. SANITARY STAFF.

C.E. Bean, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.I. Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor.
H. Shepherd, M.S.I.A.M.R.San.I. Sanitary Inspector for meat
inspection.

Clerical staff - 3 clerks (part-time).

2. WATER SUPPLY.

	<u>1949.</u>	<u>1948.</u>
Rainfall -	26.98 ins.	33.98 ins.

The only new major work carried out during the year was the installation of a new electric pump at Castleton Waterworks which came into operation in May. New connections were made as under:-

{ a} domestic use.....	1
{ b} agricultural purposes.....	1
{ c} other purposes.....	3

1844 houses in the Urban district are provided with a supply direct into the houses, 80 houses obtain their water supply by means of standpipes.

8 houses and a displaced persons Camp (approximately 750 inhabitants) in the area of the Sherborne Rural District, also have a domestic water supply from your Council.

During an abnormally dry summer the supply has remained adequate in quantity throughout the year and the quality from each source has remained satisfactory. $3\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons were supplied to the Sherborne Rural District Council. 89 bacteriological and 4 chemical examinations were carried out on the supplies during the year. The water is subjected to filtration and chlorination.

A number of private well supplies are used in the district for industrial purposes. Constant supervision of these supplies is maintained in connection with which 37 samples of water were taken and submitted to bacteriological examination.

Your attention should again be drawn to the fact that ball valve hydrants are still in use on your water mains, and that the substitution of these by a more satisfactory type of hydrant is called for.

3. DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

No major works were carried out during the year. The Council are still awaiting delivery of the electric pump at the Sewage Disposal Works to deal with 'off-peak' and night flows. Consideration has also been given during the year to providing a 9" sewer extension in the Bristol Road in connection with the housing site developed there, and to the replacement of sections of defective sewers in Long Street and South Street.

4. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

(a) House Refuse. The local authority's scheme provides for the collection of house refuse weekly and disposal by controlled tipping. The Council have taken action to acquire a further five acres of land for future use in this connection.

(b) Salvage. Special collections (except kitchen waste) ceased on the 1st September 1949 as the collection no longer was an economic proposition. The amounts of salvage collected during the eight months of the year were:-

	<u>tons.</u>	<u>cwts.</u>	<u>qrs.</u>
Paper	62.	13.	3.
Pig Food	14.	19.	1.
Rags	1.	7.	3.
Metal	7.	15.	2.
Bones		13.	2.
String		4.	3.
	<u>87.</u>	<u>14.</u>	<u>2.</u>

(c) Cesspool Emptying. No provision is required to be made in the district.

5. RIVERS & STREAMS POLLUTION.

One sample of the effluent from the Council's Sewage Disposal Works was submitted for examination, and proved to be satisfactory. Some difficulty was experienced during the year from intermittent pollution of the river, by oil obtaining access along with surface water drainage.

6. SHOPS ACTS.

No. of inspections carried out.....	12
No. of defects found.....	Nil
No. of notices served.....	Nil
No. of notices complied with.....	Nil

7. FACTORIES ACT 1937.

	<u>No. of premises on register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>	<u>Written Notices.</u>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by the local authority	42	25	3
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority	17	14	-
(iii) other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	13	7	-
Total -	72	46	3

	<u>No. of cases in which defects were -</u>	
	<u>Found</u>	<u>Remedied</u>
Sanitary Conveniences - Unsuitable or defective	3	3
Total -	3	3

No. of outworkers - 61.

8. SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Regular observations have continued to be carried out. Informal action has been taken in three cases, one of which resulted in consultations at Ministry level. In this particular case the quality of the fuel obtainable was blamed, but arrangements were made for the fitting of a grit extractor plant at the factory.

9. SWIMMING BATHS.

There is one private swimming bath in the district available for use of the public during part of the year. When used by the public the bath is under the control of the local authority and is subject to chlorination.

10. CAMPING SITES.

Licences were granted in connection with 2 caravan sites.

11. VERMINOUS PREMISES.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

12. RATS & MICE.

The scheme operated by the North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee has worked reasonably satisfactorily during the year. There appears to have been a marked decrease locally in the rat population. It is still considered that a combined action by one authority in any given area would be better than zoning rodent control.

13. RAG FLOCK ACTS 1911 - 1922.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

14. SCHOOLS.

Sanitary inspections of schools and school canteens in the district were carried out during the year.

15. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948 - SECTION 47.

No action was required to be taken during the year with regard to the removal of persons in need of care and attention and living in insanitary conditions.

16. HOUSING.

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -

(1) (a)	No. of houses inspected during the year.....	37
(b)	No. of inspections made.....	43
(2) (1)	No. of informal notices served.....	7
{ 2 }	No. of informal notices complied with.....	7
{ 3 }	No. of statutory notices served.....	Nil
{ 4 }	No. of statutory notices complied with.....	Nil
(3) (1)	No. of houses reported under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936.....	Nil
(2)	Action taken by the local authority in respect of such houses -	
(a)	Demolition Orders made.....	Nil
(b)	Undertakings accepted for -	
(i)	Closure.....	Nil
(ii)	Re-conditioning.....	Nil
(c)	Other action.....	Nil
(4)	<u>Overcrowding.</u>	

(a)	No. of cases of 'statutory overcrowding' found and reported to Local Authority.....	10
(b)	No. of cases of overcrowding abated.....	5
(c)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding.....	Nil

Total number of working class houses in district.....1211

Apart from the provision of 11 new houses by the Council and 3 by private enterprise during the year, little has been done to improve the housing conditions in the district. No houses have been represented to you under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 as being unfit for human habitation incapable of being made fit at reasonable cost. No application has been made to the Council for a reconditioning grant under the provisions of the Housing Act 1949. Your Medical Officer drew your attention to the unsatisfactory conditions under which many families were living in 'houses let in lodgings' and consideration was given by your Council as to whether byelaws should not be introduced to control the conditions in such tenements.

The year saw the completion of the scheme for the provision of aged persons dwellings at Durrant Close. No difficulty has been experienced in finding tenants for these houses, comprising one living room, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom, and the provision of these dwellings has been one step in solving the problem of the care of aged persons, which is increasing year by year.

(5) Provision of new houses and re-housing.

No. of houses provided by the local authority -

	<u>Temporary Prefab.</u>	<u>Traditional Type.</u>
{a} During 1949	-	11
{b} Post-war	40	79

Three new houses were provided by private enterprise.

No. of houses held under requisition at the end of the year.....	9
No. of houses on which Demolition or Closing Orders had been made, occupied under licence at the end of the year.....	11
No. of families re-housed during the year by local authority....	19

During the year 10 recommendations for the granting of additional points on medical grounds in connection with their application for a Council house, were made by the Medical Officer of Health in respect of the conditions under which 26 applicants were living, following inspections carried out by him.

17. INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

1. MILK.

On the 1st October the Milk & Dairies Act of 1944 came into operation, together with the regulations made under that Act. The effect of the Act, as far as your Council is concerned, is to transfer to the County Council your responsibilities with regard to the supervision of pasteurisation plants, and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries the supervision of the hygienic methods of milk production on the farm. Under the Act you continued to be responsible for the hygienic method of milk distribution within your district and for the control of milk supplies where there are reasonable grounds for believing that milk-borne disease has been, or is likely to be, caused by the consumption of milk sold within your district. The statistics under paragraph (A) below relate to the period of the year up to the 1st October and paragraph (B) subsequent to the 1st October.

A. (a) Milk & Dairies Order 1926.

No. of farms in the district registered for milk production.....	9
No. of farms producing designated milk -	
(a) Tuberculin Tested.....	4
(b) Accredited.....	4
No. of farms producing non-designated milk.....	5
No. of registered dairymen (cowkeepers & milk sellers)..	14
No. registered as wholesale.....	7
" " retailers.....	3
" " wholesale and retailers.....	3

(b) Milk (Special Designations) Order 1936 - 1941.

No. of licences granted during the year -

Tuberculin Tested.....	1
Pasteurised.....	2
Supplementary.....	Nil

(c) Cowsheds and Milkshops.

No. of inspections made during the year.....	20
No. of cases in which contravention of the regulations were found.....	Nil
No. of prosecutions undertaken.....	Nil

B. (a) Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949.

No. of 'dairies' in the district subject to registration.....	4
No. of 'distributors' in the district subject to registration.....	5

(b) Milk (Special Designations)(Pasturised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations 1949.

No. of licensed dealers.....2

(c) Milk (Special Designations)(Raw Milk) Regulations 1949.

No. of licensed dealers.....2

Milk Sampling.

No. of samples taken and submitted for examination during the year -

Tuberculin Tested }	
Accredited }	9
Pasteurised.....	12
Ungraded.....	20

2. Other Food Premises.

No. of premises in the district subject to Section 13 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938.....	14
No. of such premises inspected during the year.....	14
No. of premises in the district subject to registration under Section 14 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938.....	16
No. of such premises registered in respect to -	

{a} Ice cream.....	14
{b} Sausages & prepared meats.....	2

No. of such premises inspected during the year.....	10
No. of samples of ice cream taken and submitted for Methylene Blue test.....	41

Results -	No.
Grade 1	12
Grade 2	10
Grade 3	9
Grade 4	10

Meat Inspection.

(a) Slaughterhouses - Carcasses Inspected & Condemned.

	<u>Cattle.</u>	<u>Calves.</u>	<u>Sheep & Lambs.</u>	<u>Pigs.</u>
Number killed	1845	1607	1950	89
Number inspected	1845	1607	1950	89

All diseases except
Tuberculosis.

Cattle. Calves. Sheep & Lambs. Pigs.

Whole carcase condemned	16	6	6	6
Carcase of which some part of organ was condemned	654	21	224	14
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	36.31	1.68	10.18	22.47

Tuberculosis only.

Whole carcase condemned	35	1	-	1
Carcase of which some part of organ was condemned	389	-	-	7
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	22.98	.06	-	9.60

(b) Butchers & other shops.

Quantities condemned:- 17 x 6 lbs. tins of corned beef (blown and pierced)

Other foods condemned:- 320 assorted tins and 2285 lbs. foodstuffs.

18. INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

No. of investigations carried out.....1
No. of disinfections carried out.....3

19. SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT.

Total No. of inspections (under all headings).....	70
" " Informal notices served.....	15
" " Informal notices complied with.....	15
" " Statutory notices served.....	Nil
" " Statutory notices complied with.....	Nil
No. of prosecutions.....	Nil

D. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS).

Incidence -

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified.</u>
Whooping cough	2
Scarlet fever	4
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	1 (non-civilian)
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Dysentery	1

Tuberculosis.

<u>New Cases Notified.</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
<u>Respiratory.</u> <u>Non-Respiratory.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u> <u>Non-Respiratory.</u>
10	2

Food Poisoning.

39 cases of suspected food poisoning were notified during the year. The cases all occurred in a single outbreak in a residential Institution.

E. THE 'PROBLEM FAMILY'.

I have not previously referred in my reports to the, as yet, unsolved problem of social medicine - the 'problem' or 'sub-standard' family.

As a housing authority you are faced with a peculiar problem when dealing with such families. On the one hand, you have a statutory duty to re-house those persons in your district who are in the greatest need of satisfactory housing conditions, and the 'problem' family is usually in such need. On the other hand, if as housing authority you do your duty to such families, only too often are you likely to find yourself having to turn out such a family from one of your Council houses for arrears of rent, and in addition, you find yourself left with a house requiring extensive repair and re-decoration before it can again be let. All this makes a not inconsiderable charge to your Housing Revenue Account.

Some 'problem' families undoubtedly improve when re-housed in more satisfactory accommodation, but unfortunately too many fail to do so and remain a social problem. Present legislation falls short of requirements toward the rehabilitation of 'problem' families, and so the only practical step which can at present be taken is close co-operation between County Districts and County Councils in order that as much as possible may be done within those restrictive powers to prevent the deterioration in home conditions, before the conditions have become so bad as to justify a prosecution of the parents for neglect of the children, and removal of the children from the home. This is unsatisfactory, in so far as the removal of the children from their home should be the last, and not the first, step in the rehabilitation of the family.

The only two practical contributions I can see which a housing authority alone can make toward the solution of the problem are as follows:-

1. The provision of 'half-way house' accommodation. This might be in the form of converted hatted camps or re-conditioned cottage property having reasonable sanitary facilities, and which can be let at a lower cost than the ordinary Council house. Inadequately housed 'problem' families can be re-housed in such 'half-way house' accommodation until they prove themselves capable of improving their standard of living sufficiently to justify their transfer to an ordinary Council house.
2. The adjustment of their Council house rents in accordance with the means of the occupiers, or alternatively the granting of rebates to those who are unable to afford the standard rent. When the 'problem' family includes a large number of children of school age, and the only working member of the family is the father, it is not unusual to find that the family cannot pay its way, arrears of rent accumulate and the family as a result lose their home.

The prevention of the 'problem' family and the rehabilitation of such families long before they come to the notice of the Magistrates' Court would be a material contribution toward the reduction of juvenile delinquency.

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health.